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SUBJECT: SWAZILAND: ARM AND ARM WITH SADC-C-AL9-01947

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MBABANE 00000259 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: AMBASSADOR EARL M. IRVING FOR REASONS 1.4 (b) AND (d)

11. (C/NF) SUMMARY: This cable responds to the questions raised in reftel regarding the Government of the Kingdom of Swaziland,s (GKOS) attitude towards SADC. The answers are keyed to the questions below. END SUMMARY.

1B. (C/NF) DO MEMBER STATE GOVERNMENTS SHOW SIGNIFICANT INTEREST IN WORKING WITHIN THE SADC FRAMEWORK, AND ARE THEY COMMITTED TO GREATER POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AS ENVISIONED BY SADC?

SADC engagement remains one of GKOS,s most important foreign policy priorities, and GKOS views SADC positively in regard to Swaziland,s security, economic development, and international and regional prestige. Since SADC does little without regional consensus, and GKOS has played a leadership role in important SADC fora, Swaziland feels comfortable in raising issues within the SADC framework. Due to its dependence on South Africa and the regional economy for its livelihood, Swaziland has generally supported regional economic integration.

Politically, Swaziland has been an active participant within SADC in addressing constitutional and leadership issues in Madagascar and Zimbabwe, and King Mswati III took great pride in Swaziland's role as mediator. GKOS is receptive to coordinating foreign policies within SADC, but is not interested in changing its political system to accommodate regional political integration.

King Mswati has pushed for a more active role by SADC in solving regional problems. He believes it, not the AU, is the proper forum to solve regional problems. Early in the Madagascar leadership crisis, King Mswati advocated use the nascent SADC peacekeeping brigade to intervene and reinstate Marc Ravalomanana, in order to demonstrate that the constitution of any SADC country (to include his own) would be upheld by the others. According to Swazi defense forces leadership, the King believed the SADC brigade was better prepared than it really was in terms of capacity. In May 2009, Swazi military leaders asked AFRICOM General William "Kip" Ward to explain to the King that the brigade was not ready for such a mission.

Principal Secretary of Defense Dr. John Kunene, one of Swaziland's main officers handling SADC issues, told American contacts that the SADC Secretariat in Gaborone is too weak and needs training in conflict resolution. He expressed frustration that, at least within the Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security Cooperation, the members do SADC's work without sufficient Secretariat support.

1C. (C/NF) DO MEMBER STATE GOVERNMENTS SHOW INTEREST IN REGULARLY AND QUICKLY RATIFYING AND IMPLEMENTING SADC PROTOCOLS?

The GKOS has a creditable record in ratifying SADC protocols, but government implementation of those protocols often lags. This lack of follow-through is representative of the Swazi government in general (for comparison, there are still significant portions of the 2006 Swazi constitution for which the GKOS has failed to promulgate enabling legislation).

1D. (C/NF) ARE MEMBER STATE GOVERNMENTS WILLING TO COMMIT FINANCIAL RESOURCES TOWARD THE ORGANIZATION?

GKOS continues to fulfill its SADC funding obligations for the SADC Secretariat and for activities such as its recently ended term as chair of the Organ on Politics, Defense, and Security Cooperation. However, comments by Swazi military officers indicated that the GKOS's budget was strained by the costs involved in holding the year-long chairmanship position (as well as by the non-reimbursed expenses of Marc Ravalomana's stay in Swaziland, which King Mswati felt was his duty to offer as Organ chair). Swaziland will be a member of the Organ's troika for one more year, and we recently learned that the Swazis likely would continue to host some near-term events on behalf of the Mozambicans, the current Organ chair, while the Mozambicans hold their elections.

1E. (C/NF) WHAT ARE POSTS' OBSERVATIONS ON MEMBER STATES' ATTITUDES TOWARD OVERLAPPING REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, SUCH AS THE COMMON MARKET FOR EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA (COMESA) AND THE EASTERN AFRICAN COMMUNITY (EAC)?

Swaziland is currently a member of SADC, COMESA, and the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), and would prefer to continue to be a member of each of those overlapping organizations. Because regulations prevent Swaziland from

MBABANE 00000259 002.2 OF 002

being a full member of both SACU's and COMESA's customs unions, it will remain under SACU, from whose dividends it receives over 60 percent of its revenues.  
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